

Prayer.

A writer in the Living Church, from a praiseworthy desire to show the advantages of a liturgy, has strung together a number of reported instances of mistakes in extemporaneous petitions. There is such a thing as going too far in this direction. If prayer is to be the offering up of our hearts to God, no good end is served by ridiculing sincere efforts. Knowing the awful results of the famine in Ireland, especially, we fail to see the fun of the following anecdote: "If the crop is poor, inelegant phraseology is bound to creep into an extemporaneous prayer. Many instances might be quoted, but none so frank, as the one uttered, when the potatoes were plenty in Scotland, by a minister who prayed thus: 'We thank Thee, O Lord, that there is no potato blight this year.'"

Appointments to Parishes.

In many respects the system generally adopted in Ontario of appointment by the Bishop after conference with the parochial authorities, is, on the whole, satisfactory. The Living Church protests, as follows, against parochial "calls:" "The system inherited by the Church in this country does violence to the order established by God through Moses and through Christ. The Church ministry here is subject to congregational polity. Parish vestries make and unmake ministers. A clergyman is the religious servitor of Messrs. Smith & Company, local lay proprietors of a territorial section of land. He is subject to their whims, caprices, prejudices. He is to fit the mantle of righteousness to their shapes and fancies. The measure of his excellence is determined by his ability to do this. The state and condition of the clergy being thus determined, let us who seek to form correct judgments be extremely careful how we measure a minister by a wholly false system that has been forced upon the Church by the exigencies of a secular and political condition of human affairs. Clergymen who are rectors are more subservient to their vestries than they are to their bishops. They treat as their inferiors those without cures, who are under direct control of their bishops, yet who are in fact their superiors because independent of lay and subservient only to episcopal authority." What seems our weakest point is the difficulty of exchange, either temporarily or permanently, when once the rectors are inducted.

Our Giving.

The Bishop-Coadjutor of Fond du Lac recently gave an address on the need which exists that every man, woman and child should practice giving not so much for the result in gifts, as the development of the soul by the exercise. With great impressiveness, he dwelt on the fact that God made Himself dependent on man when Christ took upon Him our nature, and needed the care and protection of a human mother; and in the same way He made His work in the Church

dependent upon the human agencies He employs.

Good Manners.

I remember reading of old St. Neot, who is reputed to have been the brother of King Alfred, that one of his pleasantest characteristics was his faculty for seeing the best side of everybody he met, and in drawing out their best qualities. In the Monastery over which he presided, it was his habit to study the character of his monks and to endeavour constantly to imitate, as far as he was able, the virtues of each of them—the patience of one, the cheerfulness of another, the humility of a third, the industry of this one, the gentleness of that, and so on throughout the good examples existing in his brotherhood. This, of course, is a counsel of perfection, and one not easily followed in a world where the majority of men find much pleasure in noting the frailties and shortcomings of their friends, and when wit is considered the spiciest when it has a little touch of slander and satire. But to those who wish to press forward to higher ranks of thought and fortune this seeking out the best in one's acquaintances, this imitation of their finest qualities which Neot, the Saxon, advocated, is one of the soundest and most valuable methods of education which can be followed. There are probably none of us who live in so narrow a sphere that we could not get profit from such a study of those we come in contact with.

The Ultimate Test.

There is no more subtle temptation than that which constantly leads us to foist upon others, or upon circumstances and conditions, a responsibility which really lies upon ourselves. When men fail in any undertaking, the first impulse of the majority is to try to discover the causes of failure in something outside of their own intelligence, skill, knowledge, or purpose. We are always tempted to find in others the defects which exist in ourselves, and to hold others responsible for the consequences of those defects. When a man discovers that his work is not gaining that effectiveness, skill, and perfection which it ought to have, his first duty is to bring home to himself with unsparing severity, the question whether or not he is responsible. It sometimes happens that a man's failure to achieve the highest results is due to adverse conditions, to failure in co-operation, to lack of sympathy and intelligence on the part of others. This is sometimes the result of a candid examination, and then a man has a right to hold himself free from the responsibility of failure; but it oftener happens that when the searchlight is turned inward, and we take account of ourselves with impersonal and impartial exactness, we discover that our own egoism has concealed from us the defects in which lie the secret of our failure. The first step toward better work and higher success is a clear knowledge of our fitness for the thing we are attempting to do; when we have discovered our error and laid a finger upon our weakness, we are prepared to rectify the one

and remove the other. The highest tribute we can pay to our best selves is to hold ourselves relentlessly to its judgment, for the success which gives satisfaction is never external. It is evidenced by external achievements, but the satisfaction lies in the possession of a quality which makes those achievements possible. No man need be discouraged by the discovery of his own defects, for the knowledge of a defect ought to be in itself an inspiration to new effort. The thing to be avoided is not this clear knowledge of our own limitations, but the ignorance which keeps us blind to faults which others discover, and which leads us to the injustice of laying upon others the responsibility which we ought to shoulder ourselves. A man's first duty, therefore, when he is confronted by criticism or by evidences of failure, is to subject himself to a searching and critical examination, to be absolutely and austere honest with himself. In this very act there is a tonic quality which makes a new resolve possible, and which predicts a finer success.

National Piety.

We do not know whether to rejoice or not at the evidences we find in many quarters of alarm at the growth of irreligious habits. These protests may be the light from a declining sun in a western sky, or the first beams of a new day of righteousness. May they have effect of individual lives, for we believe that lives lived conscientiously have great effect in encouraging godly living as well as in deterring from evil courses. Preaching on the subject of the King's Coronation, the Bishop of Durham said: "We have been moving fast and far in our national life into conditions which cannot possibly be pleasing to the God Who has indeed been good to England. True, the land contains, in His mercy, many righteous. True, we find at an hour like this that under a vast surface of indifference there lives amongst us still an instinct toward prayer. The activities of Church life are innumerable, sometimes almost to bewilderment. Yet on the other hand there is an ominous decline in habits of common piety. Public worship, certainly in any fulness, is no longer the custom that it was. The hearing of God's Word, by multitudes even of Church-goers, is cast aside as a weariness and given up. Family worship, vital to the true godliness of a people, seems to be tending to extinction. The Holy Day is profaned on an enormous scale, without thought, without scruple, without shame, as if it were an antiquated bondage instead of a Divine gift immeasurably important to the moral health and fibre of personal and common life. Wealth is worshipped here, and envied there, with a blind intensity as bad as that of decadent paganism. And dark things are said by some who seem to know, about a decay, a mortification of virtue amidst our material and aesthetic splendour, yea, in this great city in its social glory, which only a decadent paganism could match. With it all, along with a melancholy silence or hesitancy

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